

Chap. 4

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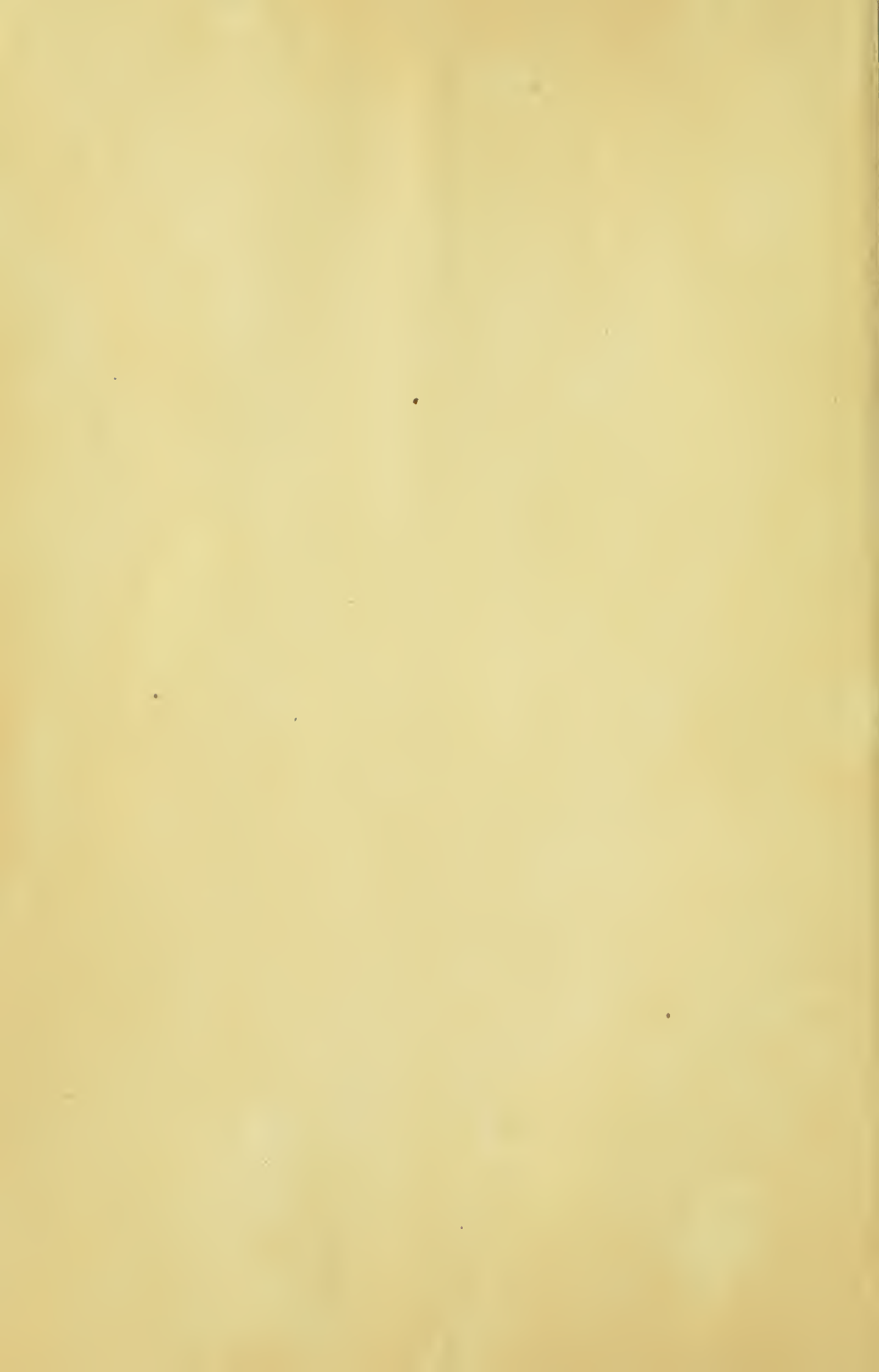
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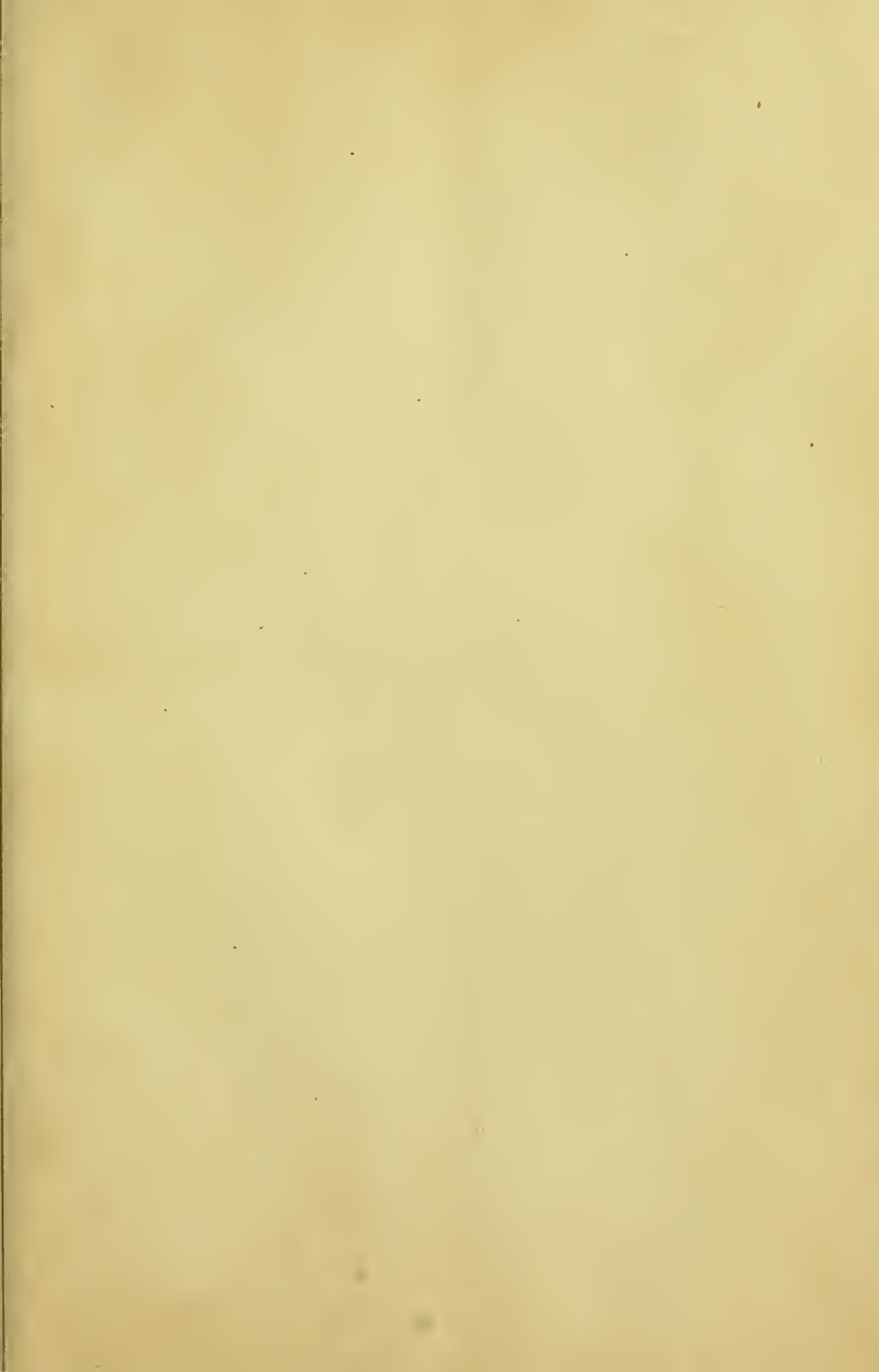
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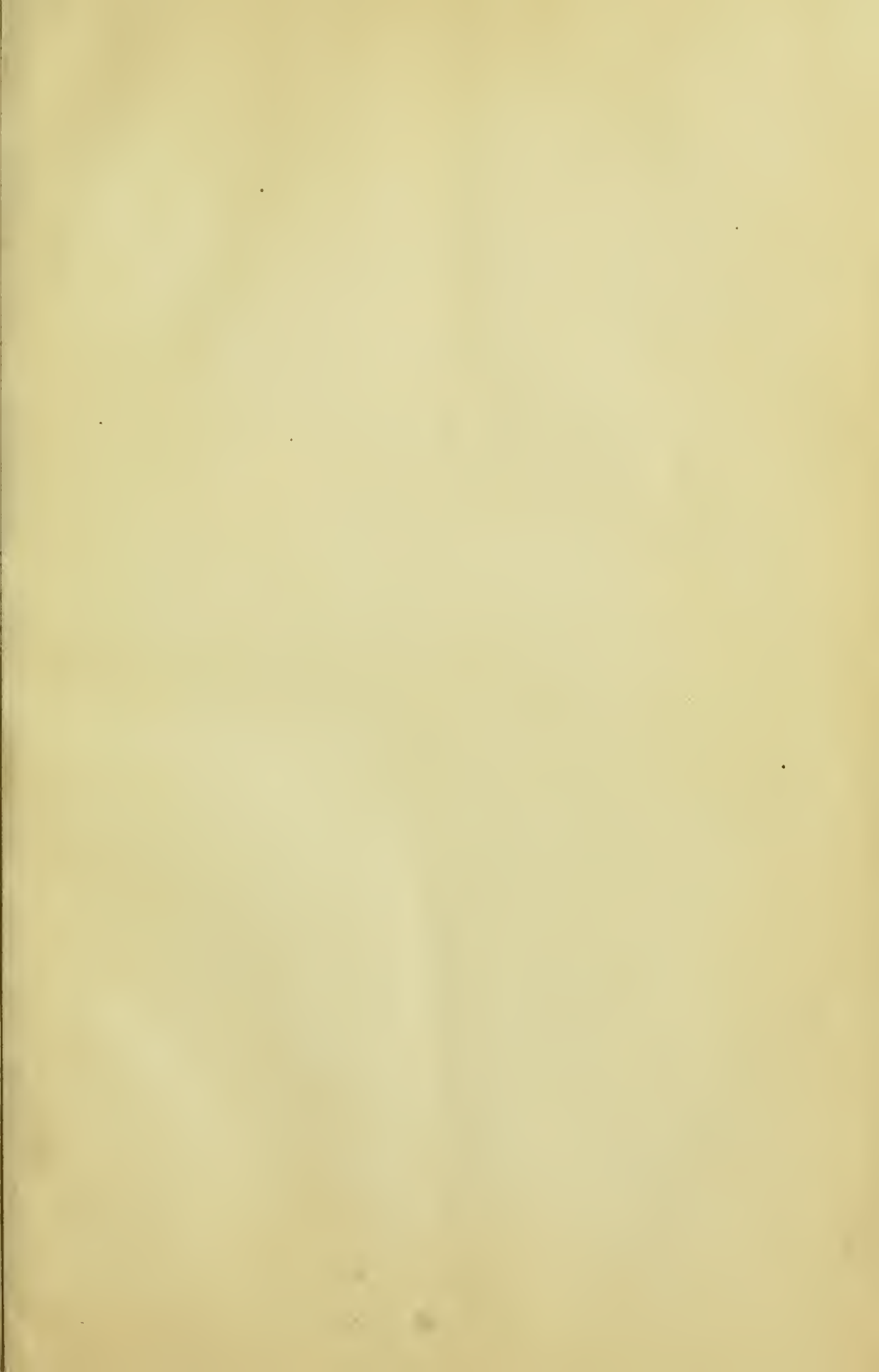
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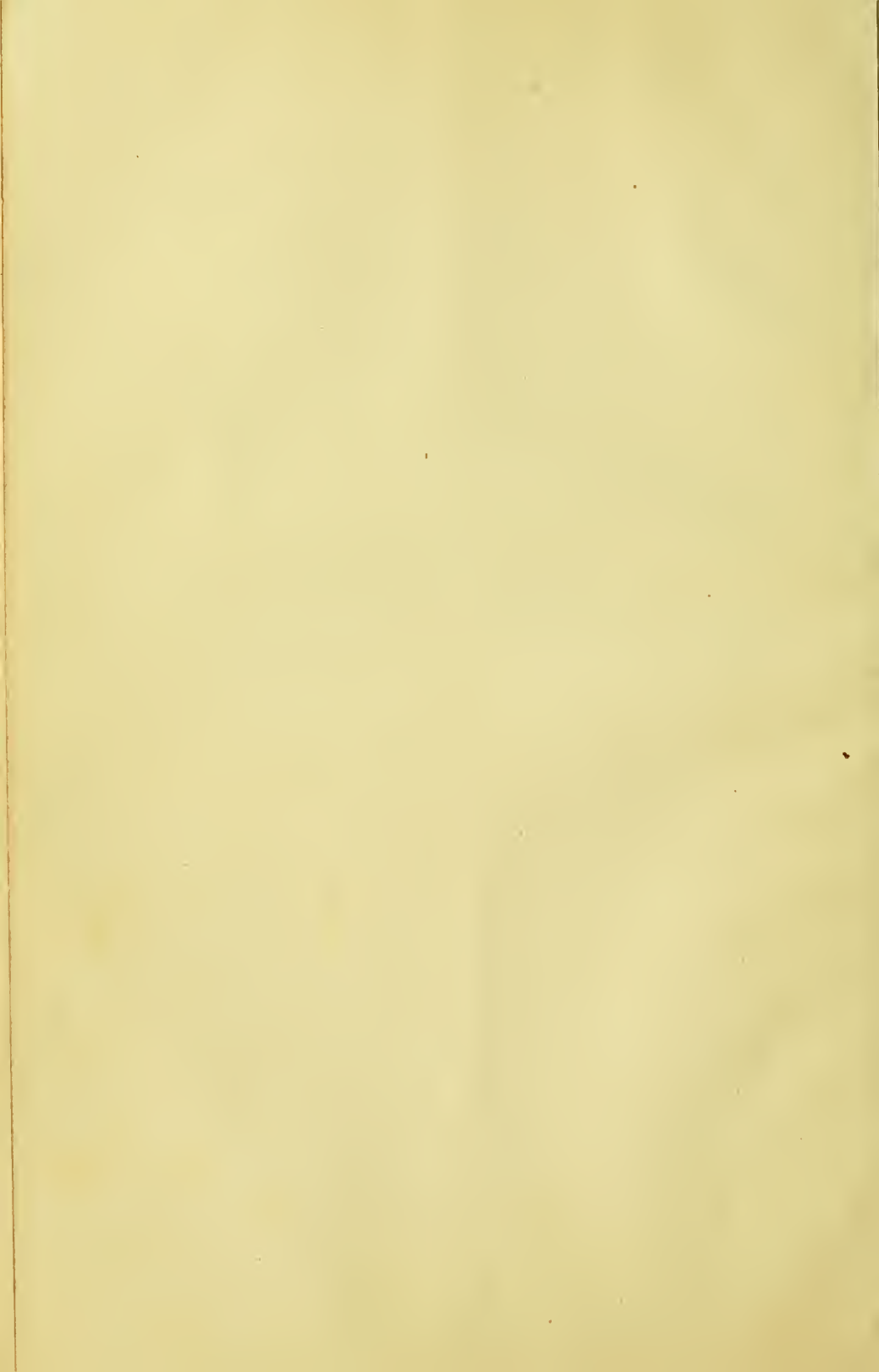












AN
EXAMINATION
OF
BEAUCHAMP PLANTAGENET'S
DESCRIPTION
OF THE
PROVINCE
OF
NEW ALBION.

BY JOHN PENINGTON.

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in omni questione illustretur.—Cic. Tusc. Quas. iii. 20.*

Philadelphia.

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DESCRIPTION
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N E W A L B I O N.

WHEN people get up in the world they become tenacious of the honour of their ancestry. As with individuals, so with nations; the progress of the latter in refinement, is also accompanied by a propensity to elevate the characters of their founders. Brigands and pirates dimly discerned amid the mist of ages, became endowed in the vivid imaginations of the Greeks, their descendants with the attributes of demi-gods and heroes, and through that medium so flattering to national vanity; the Romans with less fancy, but equal pride, regarded reverentially as the founders of the eternal city, a band of out-laws and vagabonds. This yearning after ancestral fame is not confined to the ancient nations of Europe, there are symptoms of its existence on this side of the Atlantic, among communities whose histories have commenced too recently to receive any adscititious embellishment, without rendering both annals and annalists ridiculous, whose records time has not yet covered with his

variegated coating of stains and moss, and hung round with those mythic festoons that fall so gracefully from the historic monuments of the old world. They stand out coldly and distinctly with their angles still sharp and unbroken, and with the nature of their materials and workmanship plainly discernible, the very antipodes to the historic picturesque.

The Virginians boast of their descent from the cavaliers, those gallant gentlemen who so freely expended their blood and treasure in support of the royal authority, and who when resistance was vain, sought a refuge among the wilds of America. Some take what is regarded as still higher ground, and pique themselves upon a certain dash of Indian blood derived from Pochahontas. Whatever may have been the virtues and merits of the individual, those of her race are by no means so strikingly developed as to reflect any additional honour upon these claimants of affinity with it. The difference between an Indian princess, and a Negro princess, is about that between tweedle dum, and tweedle dee; but the parties who boast of their descent from the royal stock of Powhattan, look down with great contempt upon the corn hoeing, and tobacco picking members of the blood royal of Guinea. From which, it appears, that in Virginian heraldry gules is a more honourable tincture than sable.

The most vociferous for the honour of their forefathers are our brethren of New England. The claims the first settlers of that section of our confederacy have upon the veneration of their descendants, do not strike us in this locality as being quite so clearly made out as they are strongly asserted. I cannot, however, unite with those who urge against the emigrant puritans, the charge of inconsistency, protesting against persecution, until, in the course of events, they had it in their power to persecute.

Their avowed rule of action, religious, civil, moral, and military, was the Old Testament. They never scourged, mutilated, or hung a Babtist, or Quaker of either sex; they never destroyed in cold blood Indian prisoners of war, or consigned them to more protracted deaths by laborious slavery in their own, or in a foreign country, without quoting chapter and verse as their warrant. It would be irrelevant here to adduce instances of the consistency of these soi-disant, "dear saints of God." They are recorded by their own contemporary historians with a complacency truly Mephistophelique, but with apparently such perfect consciousness of rectitude of motive, that charity induces readers, out of New England, to apply to the cases the lines of Pope,—

" For virtue's self may too much zeal be had,
The worst of madmen is a saint turned mad."

The annually recurring chorus of "Pilgrim Fathers," excited in time the envy of the neighbouring New Yorkers, which feeling was allayed by Mr. Verplank, pointing out to them the rich mass of ancestral dignity, embodied in the character of their Dutch forefathers. This was, indeed, opening a hitherto unworked mine of honour, the existence of which had never been even suspected. In an anniversary discourse, delivered several years ago, before the New York Historical Society, among the reasons why the audience should not blush for their Dutch progenitors, Mr. Verplank assigns the circumstance of the latter, "amazing the world "in the seventeenth century, by an exhibition of the wonderful effects of capital and credit, and their shaming the poor "prejudices of their age out of countenance by a high "minded and punctilious honesty." Among those, who at this period, were amazed at an exhibition of Dutch mercantile spirit, shaming the poor prejudices of the age, was

the Count D'Estrades. As the general reader is doubtless familiar with the occurrence that excited this emotion, so rarely evinced by the practised diplomatist, it is not worth while to recount it here. But the Count's amazement, was exceeded by that of the English; when after reading the harrowing details of the massacre of their countrymen at Amboyna, they encountered the closing passage. "They had prepared a clothe of blacke velvet for Captaine Towerson, his bodie to fall upon, which being stained with his bloud, *they afterwards put to the account of the English Company.*" (Purchas Pilgrims, vol. i. Lib. v.

Soon after this item was posted in their books, and which, I suppose, is now-a-days to be regarded as an illustration of their "high-minded and punctilious honesty; the Hollanders, in the same spirit of commercial jealousy which formed the main spring of the Amboyna movement, alleged to the Japanese, that the overthrow of their government was meditated by the Portuguese traders. The latter, in revenge "amazed" the natives by informing them the Dutch were Christians! With the same fierce unscrupulous determination to prevent a competition in trade, they guided in winter their whilom guests, the English puritans, who left Holland with the expectation of settling at the mouth of the Hudson, to a bleak and distant shore, with the fair prospect of the extinction of a rival establishment before spring.

Mr. Verplank says something of the Dutch at this period, "serving the cause of freedom and reason." What they did to serve the cause of reason, does not occur to me; their services in the cause of freedom, are somewhat equivocally set forth in the fact, that under Dutch auspices, African slavery first made its appearance in this country. When Mr. Verplank reproaches the descendants of this people, with their "degeneracy and comparatively lax commercial morality,"

it is incumbent on him to show, that the Dutch practice was the standard of mercantile ethics in the seventeenth century.

The colonial establishments in North America, of Spain, France, England and Sweden, were all connected with exertions, individual and legislative, to Christianize the natives. Are there any records or traditions of similar efforts made by the Dutch? there are no records, and the traditions would be of little weight with those who hold the emphatic opinion of the annalist Chalmers (p. 571,) "The traditions of no country merit much regard, but those of such a people, are worthy of none." The relations of the natives of North America, with all their transatlantic brethren, are chequered webs, in some of which the bright, and in others the sombre tints prevail, but with this nation that so much "amazed" its contemporaries of the seventeenth century, they form a tissue whose uniform darkness presents to the philanthropist no enlivening diversity of the Indian benefited, and the Dutch thereby honoured.

Some of the contributors to the history of our own state, in gratifying their longing after a more brilliant epoch in its annals, that the arrival of Penn have had recourse to a rare tract in 32 pages 4th, with this title (note 1.) "A description of the province of New Albion, and a direction for adventurers with small stock to get two for one, and good land freely: and for gentlemen, and all servants, labourers, and artificers, to live plentifully. And a former description reprinted of the healthiest, pleasantest, and richest plantation of New Albion in North Virginia, proved by thirteen witnesses. Together with a letter from master Robert Evelin, that lived there many years; showing the particularities and excellency thereof. With a briefe of the charge of victual and necessaries, transport and buy stock for each planter and labourer, there to get his master 50*l.* per annum or more, in twelve trades and

“at 10*l.* charges onely a man. Printed in the year 1648,” on the next page are “The order Medal and Riban of the “Albion Knights, of the conversion of 23 kings, their sup-
“port,” illustrated by three small engravings. The Medal presents the effigies of a coronetted personage, whose costume approaches to that of the time of the Heptarchy, with the legend EDMUNDUS COMES PALATINUS ET GUBERN. ALBION. On the reverse are armoial bearings—Two coats impaled. The dexter, a hand dexter issuing from the parti line grasping a sword erect, surmounted by a crown. The sinister is the coat of arms, born by the present Plowden family of Shropshire England—a fesse dancettée with two fleurs de lis on the upper points. Supporters, two bucks rampart gorged with crowns. Crest a ducal coronet. Motto VIRTUS BEAT SIC SUOS. “The order” is formed by the achievement just described, encircled by twenty-two heads coupéd and crowned, held up by a savage kneeling: the whole surrounded with the legend, DOCEBO INIQUOS VIAS TUAS ET IMPII AD TE CONVERTENTUR, which is the vulgate version of the 15th verse of the 50th Psalm. This page is farthermore garnished with sundry other scraps of Latin and English, of no very particular bearing upon the matter in hand.

On the recto of the second leaf “This epistle and preface “shows Catoes best rules for a plantation. To the Right “Honourable and mighty Lord Edmund, by Divine Providence, lord proprietor, Earl Palatine, Governor and “Captain General of the Province of New Albion, and to “the Right Honourable, the Lord Viscount Monson of Cast-
“temain, the Lord Sherard Baron of Letrim: and to all “other, the Vicounts, Barons, Baronets, Knights, Gentle-
“men, Merchants, Adventurers, and Planters of the hope-
“full company of New Albion, in all forty-four undertakers
“and subscribers, bound by indenture to bring and settle

“three thousand able trained men, in our said severall
 “plantations in the said Province. Beauchamp Plantagenet
 “of Belvil in New Albion Esquire, one of the company,
 “wisheth all health and happiness, and heavenly blessings.”
 The “epistle and preface” thus terminates, at the eighth
 page “And since according as other Palatines, as he of
 “Chester and Duresme, made their Barons and Knights as
 “therein many are yet living, you my lord have begun to
 “honour first your own children, I tender my best respects
 “unto your sonne and heir apparent Francis Lord Ployden,
 “Baron of Mount Royall, Governour, and to Thomas Lord
 “Ployden Baron of Roymont High Admiral: and to the
 “Lady Winefrid Baroness of Uvedale, the pattern of mild-
 “ness and modesty; and to the Lady Barbara Baronesse of
 “Ritchneck, the mirror of wit and beauty, and to the Lady
 “Katherine Baronesse of Prince * * t, that pretty babe of
 “grace, whose fair hands I kisse, hoping on your Lordships
 “invitation, C. C. T. and your two baronets L. and M. to
 “get them as they promised to goe with us. I hope to get
 “your knights and two hundred planters, on this side ready.
 “And thus with tender of my service to your Lordships,
 “and all the company, I rest

“Middleboro this 5 of } Your humblest servant
 “December 1648 } BEAUCHAMP PLANTAGENET.”

This “description” is classed among the historical mu-
 niments of Pennsylvania; its claims to be continued there, it
 is my present purpose to investigate.

Juliet was more influenced by her feelings than by her
 judgment, when she came to the conclusion that as “a rose
 under any other name, would smell as sweet,” there was
 nothing in a name. The chronicler of the Palatinate of
 New Albion signs himself Beauchamp Plantagenet. The
 junction of these two magnificent surnames, savours strongly

of the adventurer. Like the plebian alias of Altamont Mortimer Montmorenci, he has found out "where a commodity of good names was to be bought," and has made the common mistake in such cases of purchasing too largely. The suspicion excited by his name is increased by a notice of the former grandeur of his family, abruptly introduced into the midst of an inflated account of the state of the times. "Then perusing my old evidences, I found my ancestor Sir Richard Plantagenet had Chawton, Blendworth, Clanfield and Catrington in Hampshire. But in those civil wars in Henry the Sixth's time, much like those of the Guelfs and Gibellines in Italy, all was lost."

Some of the histories of the counties of England, are so ample in detail, that in the deduction of manorial property each fee is pursued throughout from the Domesday Lord to the then proprietor, and so comprehensive as to give genealogical notices of all who make any pretensions to distinction. It is probable, therefore, that in Warner's collections for the history of Hampshire, in 6 vols. 4to, there are full historical notices of these four places. This work I never saw, but from other sources have gleaned some facts, which rather invalidate the "old evidences" of Mr. Plantagenet's family importance. Clenfield or Clanfield, according to the *Notitia Monastica* of Tanner, (p. 162 edit. 1744,) was granted by Edward II. in the year 1313, to the Church of St. Mary, at Southwyke, and at the suppression of the religious houses by Henry VIII. was given to John White. So it appears, that for upwards of a hundred years both before and after "the civil wars in Henry the Sixth's time" Clanfield was not in possession of a Plantagenet. Again, among the parochial notices in "The Annual Hampshire Repository" Winchester, 1799—1801, it is stated that at the commencement of the civil wars a part of Kateryngton or Catrington, was released by Henry Kewyk to William Port

Sir Richard Plantagenet's ownership thereof, not being in the slightest degree alluded to. The name does not appear in Berry's folio of Hampshire pedigrees, nor among the magnates of the same county, in the 12th year of the reign of Henry VI., a list of whom is preserved in Fuller's Worthies of England.

I have marveled that when on the subject of his lineage, Mr. Plantagenet did not inform his readers of the royal blood in his veins. Of this interesting circumstance the world would probably have remained ignorant, had it not been announced in the "Sketches of the primitive settlements on the river Delaware, by James N. Barker," that the historian of New Albion was "a descendant of kings!" The really pleasant and ingenious writer of these sketches, seems to be a gentleman for whom a flight of fancy has stronger charms than the severity of historical research, and who finds the simplicity of early American annals insipid without a dash of the melo-drama. He would greatly have enhanced the gratification arising from his conclusion had he communicated the geneological data, by which he arrived at it. But with some historians an assumption on the strength of fancy, is a more congenial and much easier employment than that of knocking the dust off of old books in verifying facts. To the familiar story told by Peck, (*Desiderata curiosa* VII. 15.) Mr. Barker must have imagined a sequel—that honest Richard not inheriting the ambition of his crooked back sire, soberly settled down, begat sons and daughters, and thus the name and the line were continued to the representative of both in 1648, Beauchamp Plantagenet of Belvil. In history, fancy on fact seems to be canonical, but fancy on fancy is as heterodox, as colour on colour, or metal on metal in heraldry. The contribution to Peck's book, as may be learned from Master's remarks on Walpoles Historic doubts on the life and death of

Richard III. in the 2d vol. of the *Archæologia*, was a literary hoax, drawn up and communicated to a Dr. Warren, who was Peck's informant, in order to see how far his credulity would carry him, and to expose the absurdity of the antiquaries of the day. The "Spartam nactus es, hanc onna" would, I think, have authorized Mr. Barker so to extend the dramatic license he had assumed, as to include and endow with interest, some of the fellow subjects of Plantagenet—there's a Master Evelin for instance, who could have been brought forward as "A Knight Templar in disguise," whilst Captains Brown and Claybourn might have figured as "English barons exiled by the tyranny of King John, previously "to the signing of Magna Charta." These embellishments which are deemed appropriate, are suggested to Mr. Barker, in the event of his "fine epopee" as the historian Niebuhr would have termed it, attaining to a second edition.

After the ancestral flourish just noticed, Mr. Plantagenet received from a company intending to emigrate, a commission to examine the different English plantations. His choice fell upon New Albion, in which, after an exploratory tour, he obtained from the Lord Governour under the Province seal, a grant of the manor of Belvil, containing ten thousand acres. He then returned to Holland, "where most "happily, the second time meeting his lordship, and perusing "by his noble favour, all his lordship's cards and seamen's "draughts, seventeen journall books of discoveries, voiages, "huntings, tradings, and several depositions, under seal of "the great Bever, and fur trade, rich mines and many "secrets, and rarities," he concocted this description. The topographical knowledge of the two, enables them thus boldly to strike out the boundaries of their territory, "Our "south bound is Maryland north bounds, and beginneth at "Aquats on the Southermost, or first Cape of Delaware Bay,

“ in thirty-eight and forty minutes, and so runneth by or
“ through, or including Kent Isle, through Chisapeack Bay
“ to Pascatway, including the falls of Pawtomecke, over to
“ the head or northmost branch of that river, being three
“ hundred miles due west, and thence northward to the head
“ of Hudsons river fifty leagues, and so down Hudsons river
“ to the ocean, sixty leagues, and thence by the ocean and
“ isles across delaware Bay to the south cape fifty leagues;
“ in all seven hundred and eighty miles. Then all Hud-
“ son’s river, Isles, Long Isle or Pamunke, and all Isles
“ within ten leagues of said province being.” (p. 26.) ’Tis
an easy matter to go three hundred miles due west, from
the southermost eape of Delaware, but when at that point
which is in Virginia, beyond the Alleghany mountains, sur-
veyors, excepting those of New Albion, would be puzzled
to strike the head of the Hudson by running a north line,
and that of fifty leagues only. Several pages are devoted
to particular descriptions of “ nine choice seats for Eng-
“ lish:” but one or two of these can be recognised; thus “ The
“ sixt is an Ile called Palmer’s Ile, containing three hundred
“ acres, half mead halfe wood: in it is a rock forty feet high,
“ like a towr fit to be built on for a trading house, for all
“ the Indians of Chisepeack Gulfe; it lieth a mile from
“ each shore, in Susquehannocks river mouth, and there four
“ Sackers will command that river, and renue the old trade
“ that was; it lieth in forty degrees and twelve minutes it
“ is most healthy, but cold neer the hils, and full as all the
“ seventeen rivers there of eleven sorts of excellent fresh
“ fish; the Indians instead of salt doe barbecado or dry and
“ smoak fish to each house, a reek or great pile, and ano-
“ ther of sun dried on the rocks, Strawberries, Mulberries,
“ Symnels, Maycocks and Horns like Cucumbers.” (p. 25.)
This renewing the old trade with four sakers was continu-
ing the same system of commercial relations with the na-

tives, that was commenced forty years before, for the beginning of trade on the Chesapeake, according to Thomas Studley, the first cape merchant in Virginia, was in the way of barter exchanging for corn, "stores of sakre and musket shot," (Smith's Virginia, Chap. II.) (Note 2.) The curious inquirer who is led by his interest in our early history to attempt applications of these several descriptions to localities within the bounds of New Albion will be sadly perplexed, particularly with the ninth "called Mount Ployden the seat of the Raritan King, on the north side of this province, twenty miles from Sandhay sea, and ninety from the ocean next to Amara hill, the retired Paradise of the children of the Ethiopian Emperor, a wonder for it is a square rock two miles compasse * * fifty foot high," (the height cannot be ascertained from the copy before me, as two letters have been cut away from the page by the knife of the binder) "a wall-like precipice a strait entrance easily made invincible, where he keeps two hundred for his guard, and under it a flat valley, all plain to plant and sow," (p. 26.)

The conclusion seems unavoidable, that though kings can do no wrong in England, their descendants can tell lies in Holland. That this brace of Palatines, never visited the country they affected thus accurately to describe, is placed beyond question, both by the internal evidence of their "Description," and by a passage in Winthrop's History of New England, noticing the arrival at Boston, in 1648, of "one Sir Edmund Plowden, who had been in Virginia about *seven years*. He came first with a patent of a county Palatine for Delaware Bay; but wanting a pilot for that place, he went to Virginia, and there having lost the estate he brought over, and all his people scattered from him; he came hither to return to England for supply, intending to return and plant, Delaware, if he could get sufficient

“strength to dispossess the Swedes.” (ii. 325, edit. 1825.) Now Plantagenet, repeatedly speaks (pp. 8. 13. 22.) of his patron’s knowledge of the country, derived from his *seven years* personal observation, and that he was (p. 8.) “a tried
 “and seasoned man, and excellent pilot in all this land and
 “seas to trade and settle us,” that (p. 19.) the plantation had been commenced several years before the date of this visit to Boston, whilst at Watcessit, “were seventy English,
 “as master Miles deposeth, he swearing the officers there to
 “his majesty’s allegiance, and to obedience to your Lordship as Governour.”—(p. 23.)

Into one map only have I found this Province admitted, “a Mapp of Virginia discovered to ye Hills, and its latt: from 35 deg: and 1-2 near Florida, to 41 deg: bounds of
 “New England. Domina Virginia Farrer Collegit. Are
 “sold by I. Stephenson, at ye Sunn below Ludgate, 1651.” The details of this curious production, harmonise in some measure with the data, furnished by the Description of New Albion. “Lord Delewar’s Bay and river,” are laid down with the remark, “This river the Lord Ployden hath a
 “patten of, and calls it New Albion, but the Swedes are
 “planted in it, and have a great trade of Furrs.” The Delaware and Hudson are made to form in their courses segments of circles, whose chords are nearly East and West lines: again, on the other hand there are some material deviations from the description,—a West line, three hundred miles from the Southermost Cape of Delaware, extends a considerable distance into the Pacific Ocean, or as it here called, “The Sea of China, and the Indies.” These and other geographical capricios, authorize the observer to attribute both “mapp” and “description” to the imaginations of their respective authors.—(Note 3.)

Ioost Hartgers, a contemporary writer, in his Beschrijvinghe Van Virginia, Nicuw Nederlandt, &c., Amst, 1651,

says "a certain Englishman, who called himself, Sir Edmund Ployden, and gave himself the title of Earl Palatine of New Albion, pretended that the country on the West side of the North River, as far as Virginia, was his property under a grant from James, King of England; but remarked, he would have no misunderstanding with the Dutch, but was much offended with, and bore a grudge against John Prins, the Swedish Governor in the South River, in consequence of receiving some affronts, which are too long to record, but which he would take an opportunity of resenting and possessing himself of the South River." As nothing is said to the contrary, it must be inferred that Sir Edmund's pretensions were set up at the safe distance of Virginia; for this braggadocio attitude could not well be assumed in a country under Dutch control, without both claim and claimant running some danger of a simultaneous extinction. The Swedish establishments on the Delaware evidently existed by the sufferance of the Hollanders, and the tenure by which they were held seemed to have been to keep out interlopers of other nations. In 1643, a party from New England under Lambertson, whilst endeavouring to obtain a footing on the river, was at the instigation of the Dutch Resident seized by the Swedes, and came very near forming the *dramatis personæ* of a second representation of the Amboyna tragedy. The threat in this case prevented any competition in the trade for beaver skins, as effectually as the performance twenty years before secured the monopoly of cloves. In 1655, soon after the New Haven people had abandoned their intentions of settling their purchased lands on the Delaware, the Dutch finding no farther necessity for their Swedish feudatories, ejected them from their fief. As confirmatory of this view of the colonial relations existing between these two nations, the fact may be adduced that their bloodless squabbles

were always intermitted when the English appeared in the river.

In this account of "the healthiest, pleasantest, and richest plantation in North Virginia, proved by thirteen witnesses," are misrepresentations and inaccuracies, which I proceed briefly to notice. The reader is told (p. 7) of "twenty-three Indian Kings, under the command of this "our Lord Royal," the origin doubtless of the bordure of crowned heads that occurs in the order of the Albion Knights. So perfect was the subordination of the natives, "that any without his lordship's stamped badge, approaching within twenty miles of his plantation, or ten of his cattle were killed, and that valiant Captain Freeman lately "killed three Indians so without badge encroaching," (p. 23.) One is at a loss which most to admire, the brilliancy of this system of Indian relations, or the boldness by which it was maintained, when, as has been before remarked the whole force of the Palatinate amounted to but seventy men. This account of the effectiveness of the Indian bureau of the government, was intended to produce a favourable impression upon adventurers; but it is as much the coinage of Mr. Plantagenet's brain, as his description of Mount Ployden or the evidences of the grandeur of his ancestor Sir Richard. The sovereignty of the country at this time was in the Iroquois. Offsets of this warlike and imperious people, under the name of Minquas will be found in the contemporary maps dotted through this section to bridle, perhaps, the conquered tribes of the race, known to the early French writers as the Algonquin and recently most affectedly called Algic by Mr. Schoolcraft. Would the Iroquois endure in their own or permit upon the persons of their tributaries, this exercise of authority, backed by seventy men only?

At page 17, two thousand Indians, "armed with guns," including the Mohawks, drove in the Dutch boors from their

out settlements to their forts on the North River. The Mohawks were never engaged in hostilities with the Dutch, but when the latter were waging war with the surrounding Algonquin tribes, a few years before the date of this description, made their appearance as peace makers not warriors. Their interference was so effective, that a general pacification was the result, (note 4.) In the same page it is asserted that at this period Manhattas contained more English than Dutch! and at page 28, that peaches were so abundant at this early stage of the plantation, that hogs were fed with them—one man having an orchard of ten thousand trees. The proverbial improvidence of the Indians becomes questionable, when settlers are assured p. 21, they “may have from them two thousand barrels of corn, “at twelve pence a bushel in truck.” Many in our community are descended from the Swedish emigrants to the banks of the Delaware; Mr. Plantagenet’s lucid account of the first appearance of their forefathers in this region, will be to them both novel and interesting. In the year 1640, the Dutch “in their West-India Fleet, battered by the Spanish Armado, brought home forty Swedish poor soldiers; “and hearing that Captain Young and Master Evelin had “given over their Fort, begun at Eriwomeck within Delaware Bay, there halfe starved and tottered, they left them,” p. 17.

Mr. Plantagenet is rather loose in statistical matters; thus, although one hundred thousand English had died in Virginia, the number in 1648, was eight hundred thousand. This estimate exceeded the actual number, by about seven hundred and seventy-five thousand. Again two thousand Indians armed with guns, at p. 17, are reduced to eight hundred naked and unarmed at page 20, but then at page 22, the “naturals” rally in great force, for nearly three thousand are mustered and told off by kingdoms, among

whom figures the King of Ramcock, with a hundred men, (note 5.) Five "of his Lordship's sixe good free-holding towns in Long Isle, "are enumerated at page 23. In addition to occupying a respectable space in the general histories of North America, this Island has been made the subject of two special publications—a sketch, brief, but of great merit, by Silas Wood, and recently a somewhat voluminous history, by Benjamin F. Thompson, but no where is the slightest allusion made to "his Lordship," or to his rights, manorial or proprietary.

This tract has now, it is presumed, been sufficiently analyzed to show that it is not an authentic document, although it has been so regarded at different periods by historical writers of various merit; (note 6) a few words will express my conception of what it is,—the joint production, with the object of raising money of a decayed actor, and a broken down pettifogger. I write the history of this transaction not from data, but as an ingenious German lately wrote a history of Rome from "long meditation on the subject." The pettifogger is identified in the self-styled ("die hem liet noemen," as Hartgers justly words it) Sir Edmund Ployden, Earl Palatine of New Albion, the actor in Beauchamp Plantagenet of Belvil, Esq. The former contributed the legal and genealogical matter, and also, to him the description owes the faint tint of topographical knowledge that pervades it; the result, probably of occasional gossip with the New Amsterdam skippers that frequented Jamestown. Whether his residence in Virginia was voluntary or not, it is impossible to say. The climate of that country *for seven years*, was the usual prescription in those days by the Old Baily doctors, for that degree of morbidness of the moral sensations, which leads the patient to confound the difference between the meum and tuum. But let that pass. This man had obtained some knowledge of the existence of

a patent for New Albion, or perhaps, had purloined the instrument itself, assumed the name of the patentee, and with the assistance of his comrade, the ex-actor, whose professional propensity for rant and fustian is distinguishable throughout, set forth his pretensions in the pamphlet under examination. This view is countenanced by a passage in the colonial records of Maryland, printed in the collections of the New York Historical Society, III. 379. The Dutch maintained, in 1659, that Lord Baltimore had no more claim to the Delaware than "Sir Edmund Ploythen in former time, would make us believe he hath unto, when it afterward did prove, and was found out that hee only subup-tiff and obreptiff hath something obtained to that purpose which was invalid."

This scheme was favoured by time, place and circumstance. At the close of the year 1648, Holland was the rallying ground of fugitives from England, both Royalists and Presbyterians. The expectations of both at home had been crushed by the decided ascendancy of the Independants. America had become the asylum of many, and more were doubtless revolving in their minds the chances of "the Virginia voyage" when this enterprize was announced. Territorial grants with *jura regalia* to the grantees were known to have been made. With that of Nova Scotia to Sir William Alexander, afterwards Lord Stirling was connected a hereditary order of Baronets, whose "orange tanny ribbon" is still displayed on days of court ceremony. But to make this feature of the scheme more imposing, a chapter is devoted to "Counts or Earls created, and County Palatines, and our Province and County Palatine, Liberties, and the ancient family twelve hundred years of our Earle Palatine from the Saxons in England, his pedigree and alliance." In the course of this curious chapter, the names of Selden, Coke, Davis and Bracton are put in requisition

to maintain the pretensions of Mr. Plowden to regal jurisdiction in America. Selden had better been let alone; far from upholding, he seems inclined to show but little countenance to this degree of English nobility. The whole tenor of his observations on the subject, is that of coldness and distrust. (Titles of honour, Part. II. S. VII.) Still more unfortunate are the copious quotations from Coke and Sir John Davis, as what is extracted from these ancient authorities, has reference only to the Palatine dignity, as it existed before the severe curtailment of its attributes by the statute XXVII, Henry VIII.

The prospectus of Plowden and Plantagenet, appealed to the associations of the cavaliers through an accomplished leader, high descended and with noble connexions, the dispenser of orders, medals, and ribands; to the prejudices of the roundheads, by a declared preference of the Calvinist form in the ecclesiastical polity of the Palatinate, and to the political predilections of both by asserting, p. 27. "For the "Politique and Civill Government, and Justice, Virginia and "New England is our president." It held out to all security of person and property, "no Indians neer;" eight hundred "thousand Virginians on one side, on the other eight thousand English, in sight five towns on the Connecticut, and "New Haven being populous;" "all former patents including Maryland being examined and found void," and preserving a most discreet silence upon the strength of the Dutch and Swedish establishments in the very heart of the territory. It described a region whose products were so rich and varied, that "he that is lazy and will not work, "needs not fear starving"—where "the soldier and gentleman wanting employment, and not born to labor without "going to war to kil Christians for five shillings a week in "the mouth of the roaring cannon, or in a siege threatened "with famine and pestilence; and ten together against a

“ few naked savages, may like a devout apostolique soldier
“ with sword and the word to civilize and convert them to
“ be his Majesty’s lieges, (note 7) and by trading with them
“ for furs, get his ten shillings a day, and at home intermix-
“ ing sport and pleasure with profit, store his parks with
“ elks and fallow deer are fit to ride, milke, or draw the
“ first as big as oxen, and bringing three a year and five
“ hundred turkeys in a flock, got by nets in stalking, get his
“ five shillings a day at least.” In fine it threw out the com-
mon lure of the day to adventurers to America gold and
silver.

It cannot now be ascertained if any were swindled out of the pittance, the civil wars had left them through this impudent fabrication. I am inclined to believe that it incontinently made its projectors the laughing stock of their countrymen in Middleburgh, instead of elevating them as it has since done to the rank of founder and analyst of a colony.

If thus early this *printed* trash became the materials of history, it is not surprising, that narratives *written* twenty centuries ago of events that occurred six hundred years before, were regarded by a modern German manufacturer of ancient Roman history as of less value than “ old songs.”

NOTES.

NOTE I.

So rare is it that besides the copy in the Philadelphia Library, I have met with notices of but three others. One is enumerated by Bishop Kennet in his *Bibliothecæ Americanæ Primordia* (p. 244) among the donations to "The Society for the propagation of the Gospel in Foreign parts," another in the collection of Mr. Aspinwal, American Consul in London, and the third in the catalogue of the curious library of the Hon. Mr. Nassau, sold some years ago in London. These two last notices may refer to the same copy.

NOTE II.

This Island no longer retains the name of Palmer. There is an interesting piece of local history connected with it, which I transcribe from Fuller's *Worthies of England*, (I. 387 4to edit.) "Edward Palmer Esquire, (uncle to Sir Thomas Overbury,) was

“born at Limington, in this county (Gloucester) where his ancestors had continued ever since the conquest.

“His plentiful estate offered him opportunity to put forward the ingenuity impressed in him by nature, for the public good; resolving to erect an academy in Virginia, in order whereunto he purchased an Island called Palmer’s Island unto this day, (about 1660;) but in pursuance thereof, was at many thousand pounds expense, (some instruments employed therein not discharging their trust reposed in them with corresponding fidelity.) He was transplanted to another world, leaving to posterity the memorial of his worthy but unfinished intentions.

“This Edward Palmer died in London, about the year 1625.”

It must be to this island that Captain William Clayborne, who made so prominent a figure in the early annals of Maryland, alludes when he petitions the king in 1638 for redress of grievances, he alleges to have endured from Lord Baltimore’s people, “And the petitioner having likewise discovered (and established) a plantation and factory, upon a small Island in the mouth of a river at the bottom of the bay, in the Susquehannock’s country, at the Indians desire and purchased the same of them; by means whereoff they are in great hopes to draw thither the trade of beavers and furs, which the French now wholly enjoy in the great Lake of Canada, which may prove very beneficial to your majesty, and the commonwealth; but by letters sent him thenceforth, your petitioner is advised that the Lord Baltimore’s agents are gone with forty men to supplant the petitioners said plantation, and to take possession thereof and seat themselves thereon.”

Bozman’s Maryland, p. 332.

NOTE III.

This map maker’s ignorance of the breadth of North America, was countenanced by high authority—“And now all the question

“is only how broad the land may be to that place from the head of James River above the falls; but all men conclude if it be not narrow, yet, that there is and will be found the like rivers issuing into a south sea or a west sea, on the other side of those hills, as there is on this side when they run from the west down into a east sea after a course of one hundred and fifty miles; but of this certainty Mr. Hen. Briggs, that most judicious and learned mathematician, wrote a small tractate and presented it to the most noble Earl of Southampton, then Governor of the Virginia Company in England anno. 1623, to which I refer for a full information,” (A perfect description of Virginia 1649 4to., reprinted in II. Trans. Mas. Hist. Soc. IX. 115.) Thus it would seem that grants of territory extending from sea to sea, were made upon the presumption, that the seas were nearer three hundred than three thousand miles apart.

NOTE IV.

The Dutch made strong and repeated professions of friendship for the Iroquois, the value of which is clearly indicated in *Le voyage et naufrage du P. Crespel*, p. 55. “Les Hollandois avoient un fort à peu de distance, des terres des Agnicz, (Mohawks) and ce fort étoit situé sur une riviere nommée Maurice, dont le cours tendoit au sud. Les François and les Hollandois entretenoient une bonne intelligence. Les deux nations étoient unies au point que les François lorsqu’ils avoient guerre avec les Iroquois étoient avertis par les Hollandois des mouvemens, and des projets de ces peuples qui venoient à leur connoissance.” This curious piece of information is derived from the “*Relations annuelles du Canada.*”

NOTE V.

It is to be regretted that Mr. Heckewelder is not alive to give the meaning of this choice specimen of aboriginal euphony. In his time he was regarded as universal referee and prime authority in these matters, and it is but doing justice to the worthy old gentleman's obliging disposition, to say that all inquirers were answered. Mr. Heckewelder may have been a philologer of acumen, and, moreover, au fait in the niceties of the language of his favourite tribe; but some of his solutions strike the general reader, myself among the rest, as not being particularly happy. But the present is not the proper occasion on which to point out those infelicities.



NOTE VI.

This list I believe embraces them all:—

The history of the Colony of Nova Cæsarea or New Jersey, by Samuel Smith, Burlington, 1765, 8vo.

An examination of the Connecticut claim to lands in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1774. This writer makes the grant to Ployden, the foundation of the Duke of Yorks grant in 1664.

Both the editions of the Annals of America by Abiel Holmes, D. D., 1805 and 1829, 2 vols. 8vo.

In an address to the associated members of the Philadelphia Bar by William Rawle, in 1824, the probability is expressed, that William Penn on reaching the shores of the Delaware “found a few remnants of Sir Edmund Ployden's colonists.

History of the State of New York, by Joseph W. Moulten, Part II., Novum Belgium New York, 1826, 8vo.

Sketches of the Primitive Settlements on the River Delaware, by James N. Barker, Philadelphia, 1827, 8vo.

History of Pennsylvania, by Thomas F. Gordon, Philadelphia, 1829, 8vo.

History of New Jersey, by the same, Trenton, 1834, 8vo.

History of the Colonization of the United States, by George Bancroft, Boston, 1837, 8vo.

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NOTE VII.

This junction of the sword and the word, though more consonant with the missionary sympathies of another church, and of an earlier period, had a few years before the date of this suggestion, an advocate in a prebendary of the Church of England better known, however, by his geographical than by his theological labours. In "The Epistle dedicatorie" prefixed by Richard Hakluyt, to his "Virginia richly valued by description of the Maine land of Florida, her next neighbour, London, 1609, 4to," occurs this sentence. "To handle them (the natives) gently, while gentle courses may be found, it will be without comparison the best; but if gentle polishing will not serve them, we shall not want hammerous and rough Masons enow; I meane our old soldiours trained up in the Netherlands to square and prepare them to our preachers hands."

P A R E R G O N.

THE impression that there was a grant of this description made but not acted upon, is formed by encountering notices of the subject entirely unconnected with the printed labours of Beauchamp Plantagenet. Heylyn, a contemporary writer noticing in his *Cosmography*, the Dutch occupancy of a portion of North America claimed by England: adds, but without giving his authority, "Complaint whereof being made unto King Charles, and by him represented to the States of Holland, it was declared by the said States in a public instrument, that they were no ways interested in it; but that it was a private undertaking of the West Indian Company of Amsterdam, and so referred it wholly to his majesty's pleasure. Which being declared, a commission was forthwith granted to Sir George Culvert to plant the Southern parts thereof, which lie next to Virginia, by the name of Maryland, the like not long after to Sir Edmund Ployden for planting and possessing the more Northern

“ parts, which lie towards New England, by the name of New Albion.”—(Lib. IV, p. 96, edit., 1669.) This is repeated in a pocket commentary of the first settlement of New Jersey. New York, 1759, 4to.

In Burke's History of the commoners of Great Britain Ireland, occurs this passage. “ The second son of Francis Plowden, of Plowden in Shropshire, was Edmund of Wansted in Hampshire, styled in his will 29 July, 1655; Sir Edmund Plowden, Lord Earl Palatine Governor, and Captain General of the Province of New Albion, in America.” (III. 253.) Berry in his work before referred to, makes no mention of Plowden of Wansted in Hampshire.

It is probable that Beverly alludes to this subject, when remarking, that the “ precedent of my Lord Baltimore's grant was hint enough for other courtiers (who never intended a settlement as my Lord did) to find out something of the same kind to make money of.”—(Hist. of Virginia, pt. I. 49.)

In the year 1784, a certain Charles Varlo announced himself in this city as agent for the Earl of Albion. He produced as his credentials, a pamphlet containing among other documents, “ A true copy of the grant of King Charles the First, to Sir Edmund Plowden, Earl Palatine of Albion, of the Province of New Albion, in America, June 21, A.D. 1634.” This instrument is obnoxious to several objections:—The style is not that of the period assigned to it.

Edmund Plowden holds his dignity of Earl Palatine of New Albion, in America, from Charles I., “ as of our crown of Ireland in capite,” depends upon “ our royal person and imperial crown as King of Ireland,” and the document seemingly emanates from the deputy general of Ireland at

Dublin. It is true, that James I.,¹ as King of Scotland, granted Nova Scotia to Sir William Alexander, to be held as a fief of the Scottish crown. This anomalous procedure, so regarded by civilians, of James, indicated his desire to elevate the dignity of Scotland, but no such views with regard to Ireland have been imputed to his son.

Absolute precision in American geographical statistics was not to be expected in 1634, but as the grantee had “formerly discovered at his own great charges and expenses a certain island and region, and amply, and copiously peopled the same with five hundred persons,” something less vague than the following description might have been looked for; “all that entire island near the continent, or Terra Firma of *North Virginia*, called the Isle of Plowden, or *Long Island*, and lying near, or between the thirty-ninth and fortieth degree of North latitude, together with part of the continent in Terra Firma aforesaid, near adjoining, described to begin from the point of an angle of a certain promontory called *Cape May*, and from thence to the Westward for the space of forty leagues, running by the River *Delaware*, and closely following its course by the North latitude, unto a certain rivulet there, arising from a spring of the Lord Baltimore’s, in the lands of *Maryland*, and the summit aforesaid to the South, where it touches, joins, and determines in all its breadth; from thence takes its course into a square, leading to the North by a right line for the space of forty leagues; and from thence likewise by a square, inclining towards the East in a right line, for the space of forty leagues to the river, and part of *Reacher Cod*, and descend to a savannah, touching and including the top of *Sandheey*, where it determines; and from thence towards the South by a

“square stretching to a savannah which passes by, and “washes the shore of the island of *Plowden* aforesaid, to “the point of promontory of *Cape May* above mentioned, “and terminates where it began.” This suspiciously misty outline contrasts strongly with the clearness and precision, with which the boundaries of Maryland were laid down two years before.

Lastly,—This instrument, slightly altered, is as close a version of Lord Baltimore’s grant, as could be effected by a very indifferent Latin scholar. The translator, not familiar with the construction of the language of the original paper, sometimes makes several English sentences out of one Latin, at others, reverses this process and the destruction of all sense and meaning is the result. Some of his verbal renderings are curious—as a specimen, “*Insulas et Insululas natas vel nascendas,*” become “Islands and isles floating, or to float.” I may remark here, that the charter for Maryland, as it appears in Hazards State Papers I. 327, is defective, abruptly terminating with the first four words of a sentence—*Eo quod expressa mentio*. This deficiency is partly supplied in the Varlo contribution to the same vol., p. 169. I say partly, because the additional sentence is without meaning as it now stands.

One of the documents in the pamphlet is “Registered in St. Mary in Maryland, along with many other deeds concerning Albion.” Rather an odd place of deposite for them,—an infant settlement in another jurisdiction. I wonder whether Mr. Varlo was aware, that the papers deposited in St. Mary were removed by Clayborne and Ingle, and that most of them were lost? if so, he was prepared to account for the non-appearance of the archives of New Albion among the colonial documents of Maryland.

The only copy of Varlo's tract I ever met with was in the possession of his legal adviser, the late William Rawle, Esq. It was reprinted with the exception of the fourth chapter in Hazard's Collection. The portion omitted there is here supplied.

“ CHAPTER IV.

“ The address of the Right Hon. Lord Earl Palatine of Albion, to the public.

“ True and lawful heir of Sir Edward Plowden, created Earl Palatine of Albion, to whom the charter was granted, did, in the late war, with great grief of heart, behold his territories invaded, his people harrassed, butchered and plundered, and others who had not resolution enough to resist temptation, persuaded by a ministry *who* (to say no worse) had more their *own* than their country's interest at heart, to imbrue their hands in the blood of their kindred, friends, and countrymen, and instead of keeping up the dignity of the crown, to trample under foot, all charters, grants, and laws, which ought to be kept sacred by all honest and true men to their king and country.

“ What faith can be expected amongst men, if those to whom they look up for protection, be the first who set an example of perfidy?

“ The Earls predecessors bled for and conquered his territories, and at great expense and trouble, peopled, settled, and planted the Christian religion therein, as appears by the leases he granted to Sir Thomas Danby, Lord Monson, Mr. Price, Captain Claybourne, &c. &c., wherein he bound each to find a number of men, to assist in that laudable undertaking.

“ The situation of Lord Albion was very precarious at the breaking out of the late war, for though he detested the (language held out by the ministry) of being brought to unconditional submission, well knowing, that tyranny must follow such haughty ideas; yet he could not follow the dictates of his own heart without breaking allegiance with the king, and which the charter forbids, therefore was obliged to stand neuter and wait the event, which by the assistance of the King of Kings, his worthy countrymen succeeded to his wish.

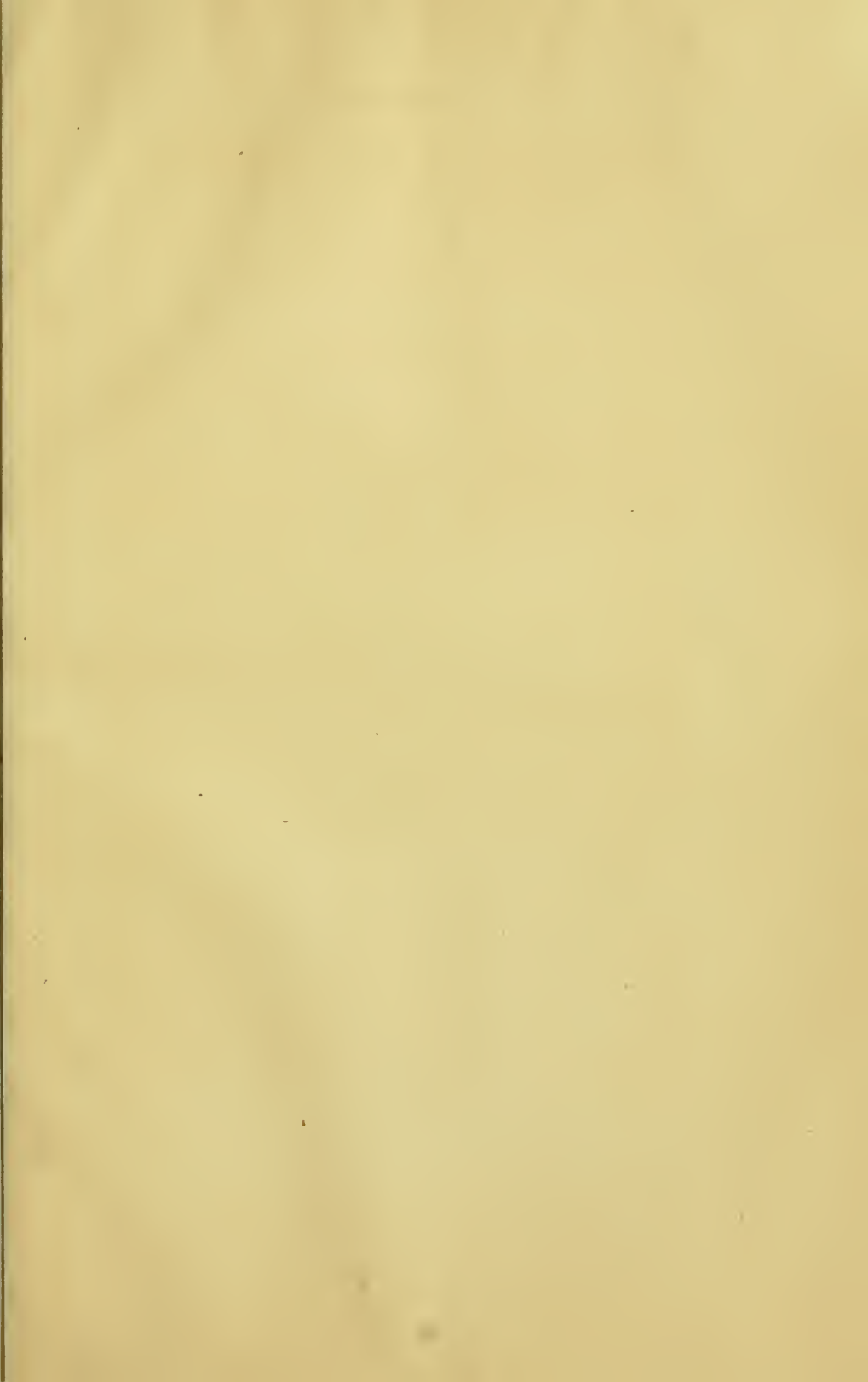
“ When King Charles granted the charter, he seemed to have a true idea, how necessary it was for a colony or state to be governed by their own laws and members, (for says he) much mischief may ensue from waiting the tedious process of law, carried on at so great a distance from the mother country; neither can people at such a distance be so proper judges of its constitution as those who reside on the spot, as they certainly must know best how to enact laws for the good of a state, who assists in the vineyard, to bear the burden thereof.

“ Therefore, Lord Albion will always think himself very happy in concurring with, and assisting congress, and his countrymen, in planning and maintaining every act that may be passed for their ease, peace and welfare, so long as he has the honour of signing

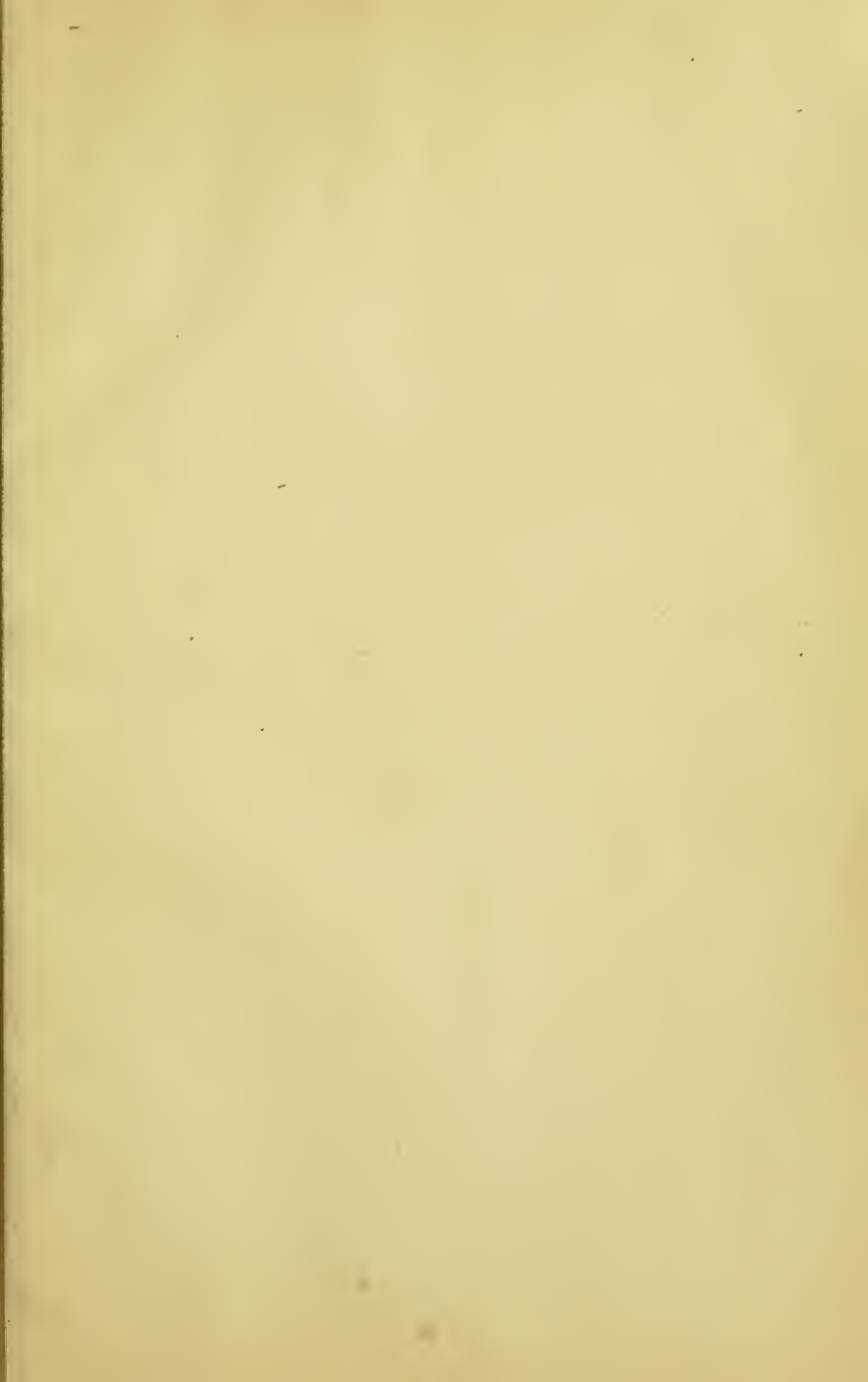
“ ALBION.”

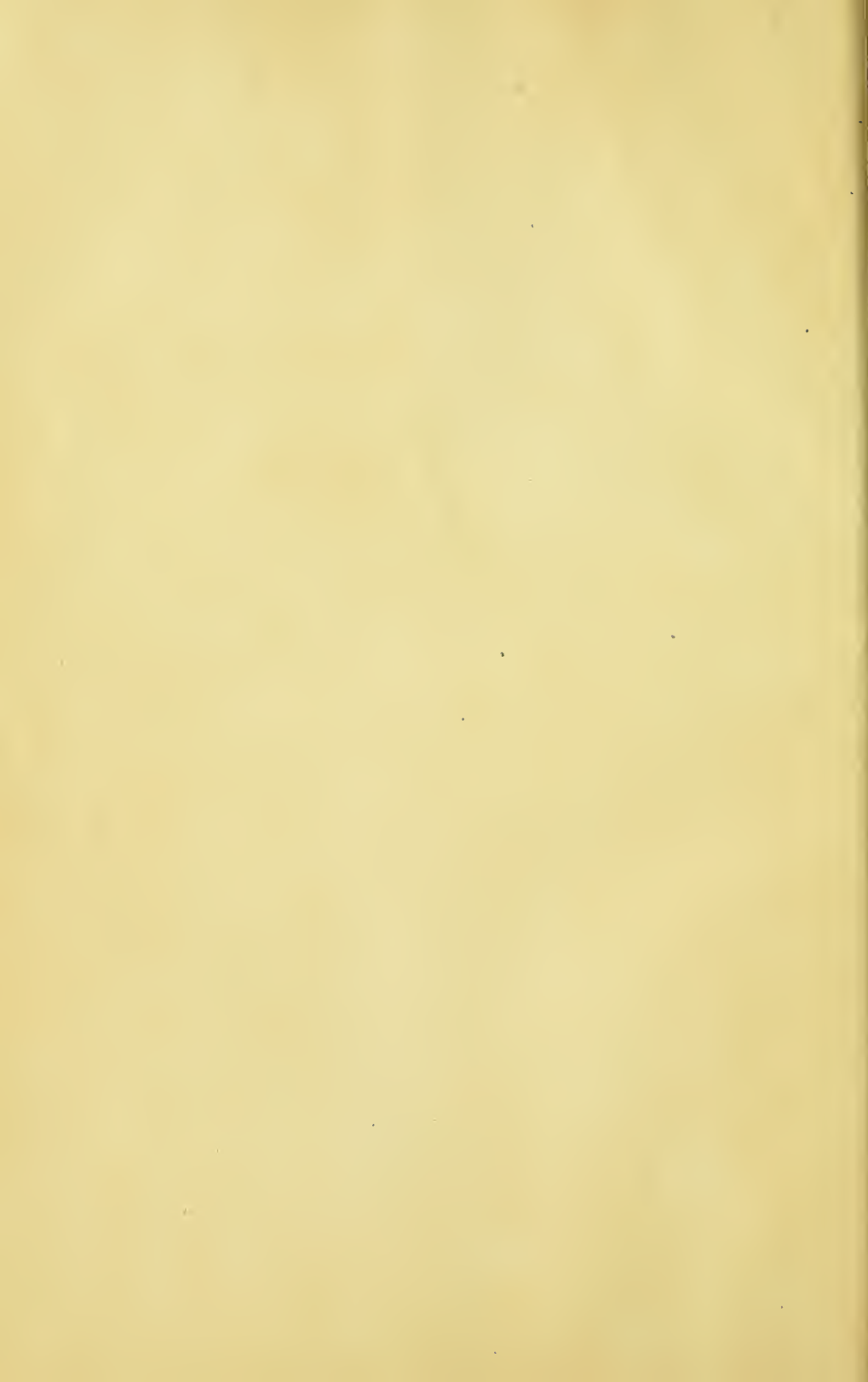
And now I suspect that critics in historical literature will place in the same category, the productions of Plantagenet and Varlo. As that of the latter is also appealed to by Mr. Bancroft, in his history of the colonization of the United States, p. 296, it behooves him to consider whether the truly *recherché* historical repast he has prepared, is improved by the addition of Mr. Varlo's floating island.

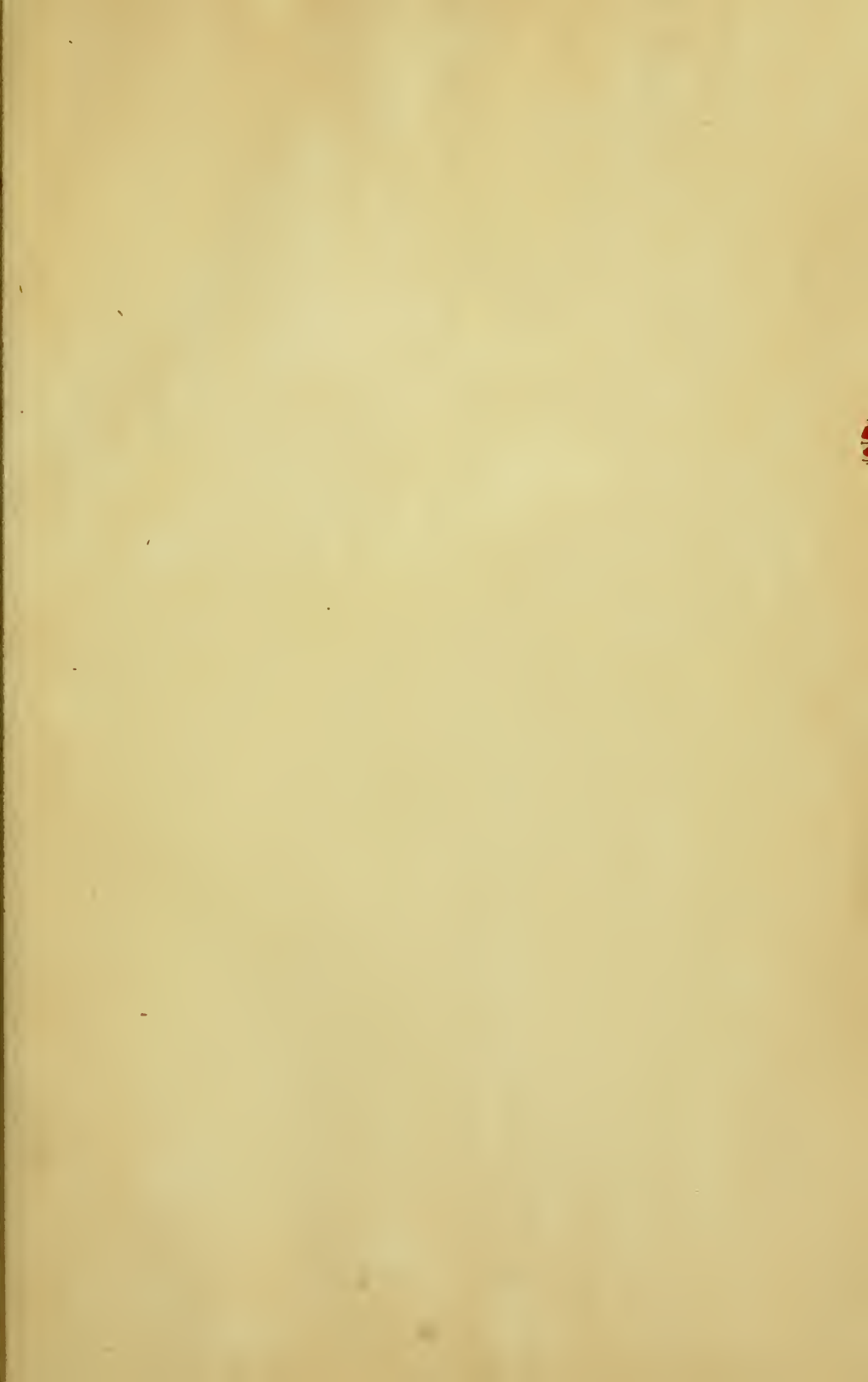
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